

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

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AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
CINCLANT FOR POLAD
USCINCEUR FOR POLAD
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO BY POUCH
USINT BAGHDAD BY POUCH

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3. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XF
SUBJ: NEAR EAST HIGHLIGHTS APRIL 7-13 - LAST CURTAIN CALL

KUWAIT POUCH ABU DHABI AND MUSCAT

INTRODUCTION: AFTER A RECORD- BREAKING RUN OF OVER SIX YEARS, THIS WILL BE THE LAST PRODUCTION OF NEAR EAST HIGHLIGHTS. ACCLAIMED BY CRITICS WORLD- WIDE: " RIVALS LAST TANGO FOR EXCITEMENT AND VERVE" - USINT CHERBOURG; " MORE SUSPENSEFUL AND GRIPPING THAN THE GODFATHER" - USMISSION PALERMO; NEH HAS BEEN SURPASSED ONLY BY " THE MOUSETRAP" AND " FANTASIA" IN ITS AUDIENCE IMPACT. ALL OF US, DIRECTOR, PRODUCER, STAGE MANAGER AND THE MANY FACELESS CREWS BEHIND THE SCENES, SEND OUR LAST THANKS TO OUR AUDIENCE. REMEMBER, RERUNS OF MEMORABLE SCENES FROM NEH WILL BE PLAYING AT YOUR LOCAL PARLIAMENT.

LEBANON: PALESTINIAN LEADERS BURIED IN BEIRUT - THE PALESTINIAN LEADERS KILLED IN THE APRIL 9 ISRAELI RAIDS WERE BURIED IN BEIRUT ON APRIL 12 IN AN ATMOSPHERE DESCRIBED AS " POISONOUS" BY EMBASSY BEIRUT. PRESS REPORTS INDICATE THERE WERE LARGE DEMONSTRATIONS AND CROWDS FOLLOWING THE FUNERAL PROCESSION IN SEVERAL PARTS OF THE CITY, BUT THE AREA AROUND THE EMBASSY REMAINED QUIET, WITH A LARGE COMPLEMENT OF LEBANESE SECURITY FORCES RINGING THE CHANCERY.

PRIME MINISTER SAEB SALAM'S RESIGNATION WAS ACCEPTED BY PRESIDENT FRANGIE ON APRIL 13. IT IS TOO EARLY TO SPECULATE ON ANY SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT, DESPITE CURRENT

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RUMORS ABOUT SPECIFIC CANDIDATES.

THE GOL ASKED FOR A UNSC MEETING WHICH CONVENED ON APRIL 12. THE LEBANESE DECIDED TO GO THE UNSC ROUTE BECAUSE OF MOUNTING INTERNAL POLITICAL PRESSURE, AND APPARENTLY ALSO BECAUSE IT BELIEVES IT CAN GET SOME ARAB SUPPORT FOR A REASONABLY BALANCED RESOLUTION. WE ARE SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE LATTER.

EGYPT: POLITICAL SCENE - WHILE NO FURTHER PUBLIC

STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE BY THE EGYPTIAN LEADERSHIP DURING THE PAST WEEK TO RAISE THE TEMPERATURE OF THE WAR/ PEACE ISSUE FURTHER. THE REGIME IS CONDUCTING AN ELABORATE SCENARIO OF CABINET MEETINGS, AIR RAID DRILLS AND ASU CONFERENCES TO LEND CREDENCE TO THE THEME THAT THE NATION IS PREPARING FOR WAR.

REACTION TO ISRAELI ATTACK ON BEIRUT - THE OFFICIAL GOE REACTION TO THE RAID WAS RELATIVELY MILD. THE EGYPTIAN SPOKESMAN REFERRED TO RESOURCES FURNISHED ISRAEL BY THE US ONLY IN THE CONTEXT OF A BROAD DENUNCIATION OF THE RAID. BY CONTRAST, THE PRESS REACTED IRRESPONSIBLY, ACCUSING THE US OF COMPLICITY IN THE RAID, A CHARGE WHICH ONLY AL AHRAM AVOIDED. SADAT DISPATCHED HASSAN SABRI AL KHOLY TO BEAR HIS CONDOLENCES TO BEIRUT AND DAMASCUS.

ARAB LEAGUE COUNCIL DENOUNCES US - ON APRIL 7 THE ARAB LEAGUE COUNCIL ISSUED A STATEMENT DENOUNCING THE POSITION OF THE US TOWARD THE ARAB CAUSE AND NATION. IT DISMISSED THE HOPE OF EFFECTING ANY CHANGE IN THE US POSITION AND CALLED FOR A UNIFIED ARAB STANCE, POLITICALLY, ECONOMICALLY AND COMMERCIALLY, TOWARD THE US. IT CALLED ON MEMBER STATES TO GIVE SECRETARY GENERAL RIAD THEIR VIEWS ON AN "ECONOMIC PLAN FOR ARAB FOREIGN RELATIONS." SAUDI ARABIA, QATAR AND OMAN HAD RESERVATIONS "DUE TO THE FAILURE OF THE RESOLUTION TO CONDEMN THE USSR FOR ALLOWING JEWS TO EMIGRATE TO ISRAEL;" JORDAN HAD RESERVATIONS FOR UNSTATED REASONS.

CANAL TRAVESED - USINT CAIRO REPORTS THAT SAM, A 76 POUND PACIFIC SALMON, HAS MADE THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL
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TRANSIT OF THE SUEZ CANAL SINCE THE 1967 WAR. SAM'S TRAINER, H. SALMON OF SEATTLE, REPORTS THAT SAM'S TRIP COULD VERY WELL BE THE FIRST STEP IN A CONTINUING PROCESS TO BRING PEACE TO THAT TROUBLED REGION.

SAUDI ARABIA: SAUDI REACTION TO ISRAELI BEIRUT RAID - SAUDI PRESS COVERAGE OF THE BEIRUT RAID WAS FACTUAL WITH NO UNUSUAL EDITORIAL COMMENT. WHILE THE SAUDI PRESS REFERRED TO PLO ACCUSATIONS OF US INVOLVEMENT IN THE ISRAELI ATTACK, IT ALSO PUBLISHED EMBASSY BEIRUT'S DENIAL OF THIS CHARGE. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, KING FAISAL SENT PRO-FORMA CABLES OF CONDOLENCE TO PRESIDENT FRANJIEH AND TO YASIR ARAFAT. NO OTHER OFFICIAL SAUDI REACTION HAS YET BEEN REPORTED. HOWEVER, SAUDI OFFICIALS ARE LIKELY TO URGE THE USG TO CONDEMN THE ISRAELI ACTION.

KUWAIT/ IRAQ: BORDER TALKS UNPRODUCTIVE - THE MARCH 20 BORDER FLARE- UP BETWEEN KUWAIT AND IRAQ, AND THE SUBSEQUENT IRAQI OCCUPATION OF PORTIONS OF KUWAITI TERRITORY ADJACENT TO UMM QASR, REMAIN UNRESOLVED. THE APRIL 6-7 VISIT TO KUWAIT OF A GOI TEAM WAS UNPRODUCTIVE. FURTHER FACE- TO- FACE NEGOTIATIONS ARE EXPECTED, BUT IF THESE TOO ARE UNPRODUCTIVE, WE BELIEVE RESORT TO MEDIATION THROUGH INDIVIDUAL ARAB STATESMEN, THE ARAB LEAGUE, AND THEN THE UN IS VIRTUALLY CERTAIN TO PRECEDE EITHER SIDES' ELECTING MILITARY OPTIONS.

UAE: SHAYKH ZAYID FAVORS US FIRMS IN BIDDING ON SECOND BATCH OF ABU DHABI PARTICIPATION CRUDE - ON APRIL 8, ABU DHABI'S DEPUTY PETROLEUM MINISTER TOLD CHARGE GRIFFIN THAT A DECISION WAS IMMINENT ON THE AWARD OF A SECOND LARGE PARTICIPATION CRUDE SALES CONTRACT. THE FIRST SUCH DEAL WAS CONCLUDED WITH A JAPANESE FIRM IN FEBRUARY. THE DEPUTY MINISTER SAID THAT, IN SPITE OF ATTEMPTS AT PRE-EMPTIVE BIDDING BY PETROBAS OF BRAZIL, THE ABU DHABI GOVERNMENT, BASED UPON A POLITICAL DECISION BY SHAYKH ZAYID, HAS NO INTENTION OF AWARDING THIS NEW CONTRACT TO OTHER THAN A US FIRM.

NEW WELL BEGINS PRODUCING - WETCO, THE INTERNATIONAL DRILLING CONGLOMERATE, HAS INFORMED AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
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THAT ITS LATEST STRIKE IS PRODUCING 75,000 BPD OF FRESH WATER. ALTHOUGH THE SHEIKH OF FUJEIRA HAS PROMISED THAT THE WELL'S ENTIRE OUTPUT WILL BE SOLD TO AN AMERICAN CONSORTIUM OF CONSUMERS, HE HAS WARNED THAT ANY ATTEMPT BY THE WATER- CONSUMING NATIONS TO ESTABLISH A JOINT POLICY ON WATER EXPLOITATION WILL BE VIEWED WITH SUSPICION BY THE PRODUCING COUNTRIES.

ISRAEL: GOI DECISION NOT TO CHANGE LAND- BUYING POLICY IN TERRITORIES - IN THE FACE OF GROWING OPPOSITION DEFENSE MINISTER DAYAN AND HIS NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTY ASSOCIATES HAVE CHOSEN NOT TO PRESS THEIR PROPOSALS FOR LIBERALIZING THE RULES GOVERNING LAND PURCHASES BY INDIVIDUAL ISRAELIS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. THE ISRAELI PRESS REPORTS THAT MRS. MEIR CHANGED FROM HER POSITION OF MODERATE SUPPORT FOR A COMPROMISE PROPOSAL ALLOWING ISRAELIS TO BUY LAND UNDER CLOSE GOVERNMENT SUPERVISION TO FIRM OPPOSITION TO ANY CHANGE. THIS SWITCH WAS REPORTEDLY BROUGHT ABOUT AS A RESULT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY SISCO'S DISCUSSION OF THIS SUBJECT WITH AMBASSADOR DINITZ ON APRIL 6, AS WELL AS MRS. MEIR'S CONCERN ABOUT UNFAVORABLE WORLD MEDIA REACTION AND THE DIVISIVENESS OF THE ISSUE INSIDE ISRAEL.

MORE TERRORIST INCIDENTS - ALMOST LOST IN THE FUROR OVER THE BEIRUT RAID WERE THREE TERRORIST INCIDENTS IN ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. THREE FEDAYEEN WERE KILLED ON THE GOLAN HEIGHTS APRIL 11, APPARENTLY ACCIDENTALLY BY THEIR OWN EXPLOSIVES. ON APRIL 9, FOUR CIVILIANS WERE SLIGHTLY WOUNDED IN A PIPE- BOMB EXPLOSION IN DOWNTOWN TEL AVIV. FINALLY, THE ISRAELI PRESS REPORTED THAT THE MUKHTAR OF THE NUSEIRAT REFUGEE CAMP IN GAZA AND HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER WERE WOUNDED APRIL 4 BY TWO UNKNOWN ATTACKERS WITH SUBMACHINE GUNS.

KATCHALSKI (KATZIR) ELECTED PRESIDENT OF ISRAEL - EPHRAIM KATCHALSKI, A DISTINGUISHED ISRAELI SCIENTIST, WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE STATE ON APRIL 10, WITH THE SOLID BACKING OF THE LABOR FACTION IN THE KNESSET. HE WILL TAKE OFFICE MAY 24. BEFORE THAT DATE, HE WILL HEBRAIZE HIS NAME TO KATZIR.

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DINITZ PRESENTS CREDENTIALS - AMBASSADOR SIMCHA DINITZ PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS TO THE PRESIDENT ON APRIL 9.

CYPRUS: ARAB- ISRAELI TERRORISM - THE GOVERNMENT OF CYPRUS' RESPONSE TO THE ARAB ATTACKS ON THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE AND AN EL- AL CHARTERED PLANE AT THE NICOSIA AIRPORT HAS BEEN SWIFT- ON TUESDAY, ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS DENOUNCED THE FURTHER EXTENSION OF THE ARAB- ISRAELI WAR OF TERROR IN CYPRUS AND SAID THAT THE GOC WILL INCREASE ITS VIGILANCE AND MAKE PASSAGE THROUGH CYPRUS MORE DIFFICULT FOR BOTH SIDES. CYPRUS HAD BEEN HONORED BY ISRAELI AND ARAB AGENTS AS NEUTRAL GROUND UNTIL FEBRUARY WHEN AN ARAB WAS ASSASSINATED.

THREE WEEKS AGO, AN ISRAELI BUSINESSMAN WAS ASSASSINATED IN RETALIATION IN A NICOSIA HOTEL.

THE SEVEN ARAB TERRORISTS THE GOC NOW HOLDS REPRESENT A MAJOR PROBLEM. MAKARIOS' GOVERNMENT FULLY EXPECTS A BLACKMAIL EFFORT TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF THE ARABS AND FEELS THAT IT IS NOT POWERFUL ENOUGH TO RESIST TERRORIST DEMANDS. FURTHERMORE, CYPRUS' INTERNAL DISORDER IS SO GREAT NOW THAT THE GOC IS LIKELY TO SEEK THE EASIEST WAY OUT OF THE CURRENT IMPASSE AND ATTEMPT TO RESTORE ITS PREFERRED NEUTRALITY.

IRAN: MAN CELEBRATES 174 TH BIRTHDAY - ABBAS AKBARI, AN IRANIAN PEASANT FROM THE MOUNTAIN VILLAGE OF DAST- E- SARD, TODAY CELEBRATED HIS 174 TH BIRTHDAY. WHEN ASKED HIS SECRET FOR LONG LIFE, AKBARI REPLIED IT WAS DUE TO FRESH YOGURT AND HIS 18 YEAR- OLD CIRCASSIAN WIFE.

YEMEN: STRIFE - EMBASSY SANAA REPORTS THAT THE WARM
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE AL- QALAWI AND AL- KUTAWA BRANCHES
OF THE AL- SUMMI TRIBE MAY CONTINUE, ALTHOUGH THE SHAFEI-
ZAIIDI DIVISION MAY EXACERBATE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE
NOMADIC DESERT TRIBE AND ITS SEDENTARY COUSINS.
HOWEVER, ALTHOUGH IT MAY BE PREDICTABLE THAT YAR- PDRY- SAG
RELATIONS MAY BE AFFECTED, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE ROLE
OF OTHERS CANNOT BE DISCOUNTED. ROGERS

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